

**From:** Peter E. Greulich  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 11/16/01 10:49am  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I have worked with and against Microsoft for over 10 years. I have cheered for them and rooted for the opposition against them. The agreement that you are proposing does nothing to eliminate the negative impact that Microsoft is having on my daily life. They are a different company from five years ago. Today, they impact my daily life negatively. They have a monopoly that is impacting me, a consumer, in the following ways:

1) Every PC that ships from a PC manufacturer today carries the burden of a Microsoft operating system charge - even if the PC should come loaded with Linux. PC's can not become cheaper because as the price of hardware has fallen, the Microsoft PC operating system has become more and more expensive, or a larger percentage of the investment that I make in a solution for home and business. Try calling Dell and getting a quote for a hardware with and without Microsoft and see if you can tell how much they are paying.....(they won't quote it)

2) Inferior products. Compare Microsoft Word and other word processing products that have attempted to take Microsoft on. Many are superior products with better usability and lower prices. But because every PC today ships with Word, Excell, Powerpoint, etc..... I can not utilize these products. Their market share is reduced to microscopic levels and I have to pay over 450 dollars (new) for a set of "productivity" applications, that should only cost 100 dollars. I have looked at Word 2000 and grimace at learning again, a new set of rules, popups, preferences and concepts that should have nothing to do with typing a simple letter. Word is no longer easy to use - it is a monolithic, feature packed, monopolistically priced software package that needs competition in the market place.....(that can only be provided with a level playing field).

3) Unwritten collusion between Microsoft and PC Manufacturers. Oh, I am not saying that they get in a smoke filled room and decide what to do, but their destinies are so tightly linked as not to require a spoke word. It is understood that new applications should require more hardware and constant consumer upgrades of hardware every two years to keep pace with Microsoft's "imbedding" of many useless features. Upgrading between OS's should be so hard as to make it simpler and more cost effective to put out 1000 dollars to get one "preinstalled".....

4) Imbedding of software that I have no control over and threatens my day-to-day privacy. Why does it have to be so hard to "not" use Microsoft imbedded functionality. Software providers like "Gator" get ripped in the press when their software takes over their computer (and

rightfully so), but I have alternatives to their software. I have no alternative to Microsoft that is based on a "make money" model. Some would say Linux - but hey, if there isn't a profitable business plan behind the software, let's not kid ourselves - it isn't viable for consumers or business'. I WILL NEVER GIVE MICROSOFT MY CREDIT CARD NUMBER.

5) Two weeks ago, after asking Microsoft to never release any information about me to anyone - I get a spam mail from their MSN network - unsolicited and unwanted. I requested that they forward the document to me where I accepted their offer for SPAM - no reply. Microsoft will trample on my freedoms to make a buck - sorry, can't buy their stock. May I die poor but unhumbled.

Remember the past when there was competition:

Let's not forget what it used to be like when there was competition in the market:

1) System upgrades were few and far between and fix packs were the normal course of business and considered part of the "cost of doing business". Today when it is easier to download upgrades with less human effort (ie higher productivity for the software manufacturers), why is it that more upgrades are required in shorter periods of time.

2) Applications were written to be fast and tight with quick response time. Consideration was given to backward compatibility to run the consumers' ages old application packages. Who can argue that the 3270 data stream wasn't one of the most open standards of all time. IBM kept that stream unmodified for 20 years and fought back competition the whole time - today Microsoft changes its standards rather than competing with more creative ideas and better usability.

3) Minimized cost of training. Since application packages were supported longer, the consumer didn't have to "waste time" every two years relearning an application.

4) Choice - Oh my God, I had choice just a few years ago. DOS, Windows 3.1, OS/2, Windows NT, Unix, thin clients, etc..... Now even the ol' DOS support is gone..... I wonder how much longer Unix on the client is left for this world? Remember when crash protection was a selling feature that kept OS/2 at 10 to 15% market share with the only real usage in the business market. Linux long term doesn't have a chance unless it can be "preloaded" at the manufacturing site and gain market share..... can't do that with your agreements.

5) Fun reading the trade press - boy is it boring today. Used to be fun to pick up the press and read about who had what vision for the future on the client. Gee, now all I read about are a few "middleware" vendors

worrying about their market share, not concerned with dramatic changes in the industry.....Palm OS isn't long for this world. Microsoft will leverage the same monopolistic power to drive them out of business.....the tie between applications and OS.

Of course there were downsides - but I believe in the free market system, free enterprise and the busting up of monopolies like AT&T. Please get back on task and make life more interesting, less costly and more fun by providing an environment where Microsoft, IBM, Oracle, Dell, Compaq, HP, Real Networks all have to compete on an open playing field. May it be an environment where the most creative and daring can win, not where the one with the most money and control can force an inferior, less usable, less stable product on me every two years for another couple hundred bucks.

Sincerely

Peter E. Greulich  
Consumer and concerned citizen.